THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY (SHRI R. K. JAICHANDRA SINGH): (a) to (e) Details of measures announced by the Government in December, 1986 are contained in the book-let entitled. "Measures for Rationalisation, Quality Control and Growth of Drus and Pharmaceutical Industry in India", copies of which are available in the Parliament Library.

New Sealing System for LPG Cylinders

138. SHRI S. S. AHLUWALIA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that due to mischief of LPG suppliers the seal of paper on LPG cylinders probed to be useless and the policy to seal the LPG cylinders with injection bottle type seal, was approved by Government;

(b) whether it is a fact that as per this policy, the Indian Oil Corpodation Limited has started sealing their LPG cylinders as per the system adopted for sealing injection bottles; if so, since when;

(c) whether it is a fact that this new sealing system has not so far been adopted by M/s. Bharat Petroleum Corporation and M/s. Hindustan Petroleum Corporation for supply of their LPG cylinders; if so, the reasons in detail; and

(d) by when this new sealing system will be adopted and the policy will be implemented by both these concerns along with the reasons for delay which is causing an increase in corruption cases?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI BRAHM DUTT): (a) to (c) As paper seals were found not to be very effective in checking transit pilferage, the Oil Industry has undertaken the task of developing suitable pilfer-proof seals. Two types of seals, viz., PVC and aluminium seals, have been developed by the Oil Industry and are now being used for sealing cylinders.

(d) It is expected that by the end of the current year all the bottling plants in the country will be using pilfer-proof seals for sealing cylinders and that paper seals will be phased out.

Delay in Clearance of Bakreswar Power Project

139. SHRI SURAJ PRASAD:
SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA:

Will the Minister of ENERGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether there has been an inordinate delay in giving clearance to the Bakreswar Power Project;

(b) if so, whether the Chief Minister of West Bengal has written a letter to the Prime Minister in this connection; and

(c) if so, what are the details thereof and what is Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF POWER IN THE MINISTRY OF ENERGY (SHRIMATI SHUSHILA ROHATGI): (a) to (c) The West Bengal Government have requested for early clearance of the proposed Bakreswar Thermal Power Project (3 x 210 MW). The Planning Commission have accepted, 'in principle', the feasibility of the project whose implementation could be taken up after the availability of funds required has been tied up and clearance has been obtained from the State Forest Department for the ash disposal system.

Bhopal Gas Victims' Compensation Case

140. SHRI N. E. BALARAM:
SHRI SURAJ PRASAD:

Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) what is the latest position of

the Bhopal gas victims' compensation case with the Union Carbide Company;

(b) by when the case is likely to be settled;

(c) whether Government are aware that the management of M/s. Union Carbide Co. has blamed the Indian Government as responsible for delaying the payments of compensation to the victims; and

(d) if so, what are the details thereof and what is the reaction of Govednment thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF CHEMICALS AND PETROCHEMICALS IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY (SHRI R. K. JAICHANDRA SINGH): (a) to (d) The District Judge, Bhopal, who is hearing the case filed by the Government of India against Union Carbide Corporation (UCC), has dismissed the interlocutory application of UCC regarding stay of the proceedings and election of forum by Government of India.

The Court has posted the application of Union of India for arguments on 17th August, 1987, regarding framing of two preliminary legal issues on liability of the multinational enterprise to pay damages to victims and non-maintainability of counter-claim by UCC against Union of India and Government of Madhya Pradesh on the ground of Sovereign Immunity. The time when the case is likely to be settled depends on the decision of the Court.

Pay ment of compensation to the victims would be commenced after the final resolution of the litigation against Union Carbide. It is Union Carbide which sought stay of the proceedings before the District Judge, Bhopal, which was opposed by the Government of India. Therefore, the question of Government of India delaying the legal proceedings does not arise. On the contrary, no effort is being spared to ensure that the victims get fair compensation expeditiously.

Multiple Pricing Policy in respect of Gas Cylinders

141. SHRI V. GOPALSAMY:
SHRI T. R. BALU:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the date on which Government introduced the multiple pricing policy in respect of cooking gas cylinders;

(b) what were the reasons which prompted Government to introduce this policy;

(c) the number of cases of malpractice which have come to the notice of Government since then;

(d) whether there is any proposal under Government's consideration to withdraw this policy immediately; and

(e) if not, what steps are being taken to plug the loopholes of this policy?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI BRAHM DUTT): (a) Subsidy on LPG cylinders being used by non-domestic customers was withdrawn from 20-3-1987.

(b) Government do not see any justification for subsidy on LPG for uses other than domestic use.

(c) to (e) While introducing the scheme, Government have taken a number of measures like identification of non-domestic consumers, colour banding of cylinders for non-domestic use, adequate inspection by the Field Staff of oil companies, exemption to deserving categories, etc. The scheme is being monitored closely to take further remedial action wherever necessary. The measures intdoduced will not give any greater scope for malpractices.